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Downpour

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Downpour | Casey Wong

Last night, I felt as though I had been born again, standing in the sidewalk's ankle-deep river and smiling in the face of that great, starless downpour. Shirtless, soaking, and sober. Sydney and I laughed giddily at nothing as we made our way over the bridge, under which the wakening river began to steadily rise. Katie, Grace, and Regan called to us to slow down and complained about their shoes as though their shoes were the only ones soaked through. I could see nothing through the raindrops and fog on my glasses and could see equally nothing when I removed them. My ankle gave way as I stepped into the grass on a forked path, and I made some graceless noise out of surprise.

Sydney turned around, extending her hand out to me, and from what little I could see of her, she was still beautiful. Her dark hair plastered across her forehead and cheeks, making her look both breathless and mischievous. I could have stayed with her under the flimsy shade of trees with our faces washed out by car lights, the wisps of our breath broken through by rain, for the whole night. I could have braved the battering wind as long as that joy never left, riding on the back of my youth and the triteness of self-preservation—emboldened by the certainty of my body's finiteness. Tucked away behind the cage of my ribs, my heart sang, the bird gathering air beneath downy feathers.